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INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL
MEDICINE
10, PARK ROAD,
OXFORD

Bedfordshire County Council

Education Committee

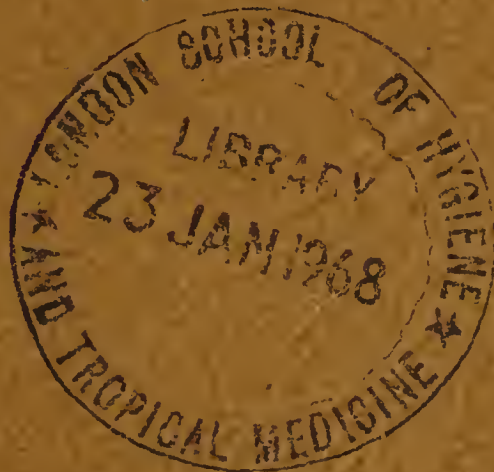
REPORT

of the

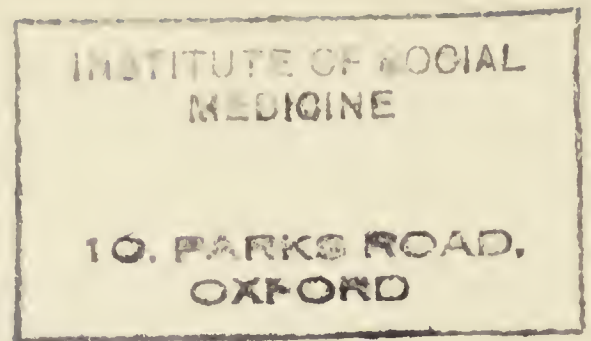
School Medical Officer

for the year ended

31st December 1950



BEDFORD
HENRY BURT & SON LTD.



TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
BEDFORDSHIRE EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

I beg to submit the Annual Report on the School Health Service for the year 1950, which follows closely the pattern of those for the last two years. In the text there is much information about the work done and the conditions found, and it is pleasing to be able to record that generally speaking the state of health of the school children was satisfactory.

The organisation of the Service is such that, with full recruitment of personnel, it could completely discharge the duties placed upon the Authority. There is, however, a lack of staff, and this is almost entirely confined to the Dental and Child Guidance Services. Reference was made last year to the report on dental care in New Zealand and the possible employment of dental nurses, but as yet the amending legislation which would be necessary for such employment has not materialised. With regard to oral hygienists, however, the prospect is brighter, and in due course the Authority will be asked to consider their appointment to the dental staff.

As regards Infectious Disease amongst school children, in the case of diphtheria, the County was again fortunate. There was no case during the year, and for the fourth year in succession there was no death from the disease. Poliomyelitis, however, while not reaching the heights of 1947 when 34 cases were notified, has, during the last three years, risen from 3 in 1948 to 17 in 1949 and 20 in 1950. Measles seems to be losing its periodic character. For the last few years, there has been an appreciable number of cases each year.

I desire to thank my professional colleagues, the teachers, and the clerical staff for their most helpful co-operation.

To the members of the Education Committee I desire to tender, on behalf of the School Health Department, our most grateful thanks for their sympathetic administration.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

W. C. V. BROTHWOOD,

School Medical Officer.

11th September, 1951.

STAFF

(as at 31st December, 1950)

County School Medical Officer

W. C. V. BROTHWOOD, M.A., M.D., D.P.H.

Deputy School Medical Officer

C. A. HARVEY, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Assistant School Medical Officers

BRENDA N. AKEROYD, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

ELIZABETH E. BROWN, M.B., Ch.B., B.Hy., D.P.H.

DORA S. JAMES, M.B., B.S., D.Obst.R.C.O.G.

M. J. PLEYDELL, M.C., M.D., D.P.H. (appointed 1.11.50).

IRENE E. SANDFORD, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

CICELY STEER, M.B., B.S., D.C.H.

Senior Dental Officer

R. B. T. DINSDALE, L.D.S.

Assistant Dental Officers

A. P. ATKINS, L.D.S.

GLADYS M. BASFORD, L.D.S. (part-time).

A. A. GARDNER, B.D.S.

Psychiatrist

S. P. CASTELL, M.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. (part-time).

Psychiatric Social Worker

MARGARET MILLINGTON, M.A. (appointed 2.10.50).

Orthoptist

JOAN M. TALLYN, D.B.O.S.

Speech Therapist

BARBARA D. BARTON, L.C.S.T.

DR. H. E. C. SUTTON, Assistant School Medical Officer, resigned in October and DR. M. J. PLEYDELL was appointed in November. The position with regard to dental surgeons remained unchanged. Miss MILLINGTON, the Psychiatric Social Worker was appointed in October, after taking a course of training at Edinburgh University.

GENERAL STATISTICS

The area of the Administrative County of Bedford is 302,942 acres. Schemes of Divisional Administration operated in the Boroughs of Bedford and Luton.

According to the Registrar General, the estimated home and child populations of the Administrative County and these Boroughs at the 30th June, 1950 were as follows:—

			<i>All ages</i>	<i>Under 15 years</i>
County Area	...	...	148,553	31,383
Bedford Borough	...	...	53,770	11,909
Luton Borough	...	...	110,210	25,238
Administrative County	...	...	<u>312,533</u>	<u>68,530</u>

The following Table shows the number of schools in the County, excluding Bedford and Luton, on 31st December, 1950, and the number of children on the rolls.

<i>Type of School</i>			<i>No. of Schools</i>	<i>No. on Rolls</i>
Nursery	...	...	2	109
Primary	...	...	131	13,256
Secondary (Modern)	...	...	11	3,214
Secondary (Grammar)	...	...	3	802
TOTALS	...	...	<u>147</u>	<u>17,381</u>

In addition, there is the St. Margaret's School for Educationally Sub-normal Pupils which was opened in September, and at which there is accommodation for 100 pupils. Sixty-six children were on the register at the end of the year.

MEDICAL INSPECTION

Medical Inspection is carried out in the schools. Children examined fall into three main divisions:—

- (a) "Entrants"—those who enter upon school life for the first time and whose ages are usually from 5–6 years.
- (b) "Intermediates"—all children who are in their last year at a primary school, or in the case of Full-Range Schools, those children who are at the age of 10–11 years.
- (c) "Leavers"—pupils attending a Secondary Modern or Primary Full-Range School in their last year, i.e., at the age of 14–15 years.

In addition, children are specially presented for examination by teachers, school enquiry officers, parents and others because some defect is present or is suspected. Sometimes they are discovered by the Medical Officer or nurse in a general inspection of the school. All children who at a previous examination were found to have some defect or who required observation are also seen.

Parents are encouraged to attend the medical inspection and about 70 per cent do so.

The number of children inspected in the periodic age groups was 5,395. The number of special inspections was 1,149. One hundred and twelve schools were inspected during the year.

TABLE I.—NUMBER OF DEFECTS FOUND TO REQUIRE TREATMENT OR OBSERVATION AT MEDICAL INSPECTIONS DURING 1950.

Defect or Disease	No. of Defects			
	For Treatment		For Observation	
	Periodic Inspection	Special Inspection	Periodic Inspection	Special Inspection
Skin	20	1	39	4
Eyes—				
(a) Vision	304	79	171	41
(b) Squint	32	14	55	16
(c) Other	23	2	11	6
Ears—				
(a) Hearing	23	6	36	9
(b) Otitis Media	12	3	27	3
(c) Other	6	1	18	—
Nose or Throat	258	103	528	101
Speech	24	2	23	6
Cervical Glands	51	19	295	52
Heart and Circulation	6	2	57	14
Lungs	29	2	106	30
Developmental—				
(a) Hernia	5	2	13	5
(b) Other	6	3	68	17
Orthopaedic—				
(a) Posture	22	6	45	14
(b) Flat foot	75	7	116	28
(c) Other	84	5	189	27
Nervous System—				
(a) Epilepsy	1	1	7	1
(b) Other	2	—	19	4
Psychological—				
(a) Development	14	5	26	12
(b) Stability	13	2	71	12
Other	24	8	119	17
TOTALS	1,034	273	2,039	419

The number of individual children found to require treatment at periodic and special inspections was 1,159.

TABLE II.—NUMBERS INSPECTED IN THE ROUTINE AGE GROUPS
IN 1950, DIVIDED ACCORDING TO GENERAL CONDITION.

Age Groups (1)	Number of Pupils Inspected (2)	A (Good)		B (Fair)		C (Poor)	
		No. (3)	% of col. 2 (4)	No. (5)	% of col. 2 (6)	No. (7)	% of col. 2 (8)
Entrants	2,721	615	22.61	2,035	74.78	71	2.61
Second Age Group	1,749	434	24.81	1,249	71.41	66	3.78
Third Age Group ...	925	281	30.38	623	67.35	21	2.27
TOTALS ...	5,395	1,330	24.65	3,907	72.43	158	2.92

It must be borne in mind that the figures are composite, being derived from those of a number of examining medical officers. It would be difficult to evaluate them precisely, but at the very least, it appears justifiable to conclude that the general condition of the school children is quite satisfactory.

UNCLEANLINESS

During the year regular cleanliness inspections have been carried out in the schools. 666 visits were made by school nurses, i.e. an average of about 5 visits to each school. 67,528 inspections were made and the number of individual pupils found to be unclean was 414. This represents 2.4 per cent of the total school population (17,381), and compares favourably with 3.1 per cent for the year 1949 when the figures were 525 individual pupils unclean out of a total school population of 16,974. 23 cleansing notices and one cleansing order under Section 54 (2) and (3) of the Education Act, 1944 were issued. There are facilities for cleansing children at the school clinics, and in the Bedford area the Bedford Cleansing Station is used.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

TABLE III.—TABLE SHOWING NUMBER OF CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE IN CHILDREN AGED 5–14 YEARS NOTIFIED AND CONFIRMED DURING 1950.

	Bedford Borough	Luton Borough	Remainder of County	Totals
Scarlet Fever	90	94	149	333
Whooping Cough	68	231	162	461
Poliomyelitis	3	10	7	20
Measles	283	545	793	1,621
Diphtheria	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia	9	5	12	26
Dysentery	—	—	6	6
Erysipelas	1	2	1	4
Meningococcal Infection ...	—	1	1	2
Food poisoning	—	1	1	2
TOTALS	454	889	1,132	2,475

Thirteen of the confirmed cases of poliomyelitis were notified as being of the paralytic type.

This information has been extracted from the Quarterly Returns submitted by the District Medical Officers.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

Taking the whole Administrative County, the position at the 31st December, 1950, as regards children aged 5–14 years was that 76.0 per cent were known to have been immunised.

No case of diphtheria occurred during the year amongst children of school age, and for the fourth year in succession, there were no deaths from diphtheria in this County.

TUBERCULOSIS

Mass Radiography

In July, the Mass Radiography Unit of the North West Regional Hospital Board visited Bedford. It was felt that children who would shortly leave school should be encouraged to make use of the service, and

arrangements were therefore made for the Unit to X-ray schoolchildren over the age of 14 years from schools in Bedford and the immediate neighbourhood.

The Head Teachers co-operated by obtaining the consent of the parents and ensuring the attendance of the children.

843 children were examined. In no case was pulmonary tuberculosis found.

A special visit was made to the Biggleswade Secondary Modern School. 150 boys, 135 girls and 9 teachers were X-rayed. The results were completely satisfactory.

Notifications of Tuberculosis

TABLE IV.—NUMBER OF CHILDREN AGED 0–14 YEARS ON THE TUBERCULOSIS REGISTER AT 31.12.50.

District	Pulmonary			Non-Pulmonary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Bedford Borough ...	16	12	28	7	4	11
Luton Borough ...	52	32	84	24	23	47
Remainder of County	22	31	53	37	32	69
TOTALS ...	90	75	165	68	59	127

TABLE V.—NUMBER OF CHILDREN AGED 0–14 YEARS NOTIFIED DURING 1950 AS SUFFERING FROM TUBERCULOSIS, PULMONARY AND NON-PULMONARY.

District	Pulmonary			Non-Pulmonary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Bedford Borough ...	6	1	7	1	—	1
Luton Borough ...	16	6	22	2	1	3
Remainder of County	10	5	15	7	9	16
TOTALS ...	32	12	44	10	10	20

These cases are also included in Table IV.

TREATMENT OF DEFECTS

(a) Minor Ailments

During the year the Clinics at Dunstable and Houghton Regis continued in operation. The Biggleswade Clinic, which had been closed for building alterations, was re-opened in June. Conditions for which treatment was given and the number of attendances of children for treatment are shown in the following table.

TABLE VI.—TREATMENT OF MINOR AILMENTS AT SCHOOL CLINICS
DURING 1950.

Defect								Number Treated
Skin—								
Ringworm (body)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Scabies	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Impetigo	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	75
Other Skin diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Eye Diseases—								
(External and other, but excluding errors of refraction, squint and cases admitted to hospital)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	23
Ear Defects	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Miscellaneous—								
(e.g. minor injuries, bruises, sores, chilblains, etc.)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	582
TOTAL								695
Total number of attendances								2,097

Cases of ringworm of the scalp are referred to hospital for X-ray treatment.

(b) Child Guidance

Throughout the year shortage of staff has again hampered the work of the Child Guidance Service. The need is for a psychotherapist to help with the treatment of the children, and for an educational psychologist.

The Psychiatric Social Worker, appointed in October, is an important addition to the Child Guidance Team. She is the link between the home, the school and the clinic.

TABLE VII.—NUMBER OF CHILDREN SEEN AT CHILD GUIDANCE CLINICS FOR VARIOUS REASONS IN 1950, SUB-DIVIDED ACCORDING TO ACTION TAKEN.

Reason	Total No. seen	No. Treated	No. Awaiting Treatment	No. seen for consultation only
Delinquency ...	14	1	—	13
Difficult behaviour ...	52	16	9	27
Educational difficulties	6	3	1	2
Anxiety	7	4	2	1
Psychosomatic ...	13	7	1	5
TOTALS ...	92	31	13	48

TABLE VIII.—THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTELLIGENCE AND THE REASON FOR WHICH CHILDREN WERE SEEN AT THE CHILD GUIDANCE CLINICS IN 1950.

Reason for Examination	Total No. of children seen	Intelligence Quotient			
		—80	80–100	100 plus	Not tested
Delinquency ...	14	4	6	4	—
Difficult behaviour ...	52	9	14	25	4
Educational difficulties	6	1	1	4	—
Anxiety	7	—	3	4	—
Psychosomatic ...	13	1	4	5	3
TOTALS ...	92	15	28	42	7

TABLE IX.—RESULTS AND DISPOSAL OF CASES TREATED AT
CHILD GUIDANCE CLINICS IN 1950.

Result and Disposal									Number
Improved ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Unco-operative ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Still under treatment	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
Removed—									
(a) Out of area	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
(b) To special schools	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
(c) Awaiting admission to Special Schools	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
TOTAL ...									31

(c) Orthoptic Treatment

Three sessions a week were held at the Bedford Clinic for children in the Borough and north of the County. For children in the south of the County, excluding the Borough of Luton, one session a week was held at the Dallow Road Clinic, Luton.

TABLE X.—DETAILS OF CASES SEEN AT THE ORTHOPTIC CLINICS
IN 1950.

Clinic	New Cases	No. Treated	No. Discharged	Condition on Discharge			No. still on waiting list	No. of Attendances
				Cured	Improved	No progress		
Bedford ...	47	50	59	15	28	16	29	935
South Bedshire	33	15	20	5	10	5	27	270
TOTALS ...	80	65	79	20	38	21	56	1,205

(d) Speech Therapy

During 1950 five sessions were held each week for County Area children at the Bedford Bromham Road Clinic and two sessions a week at the Dunstable Health Centre. The total number of attendances was 1,373. The Speech Therapist also visited schools to discuss individual children with teachers, and to advise on speech defects.

TABLE XI.—NUMBER OF CHILDREN TREATED FOR SPEECH DEFECTS DURING 1950, TOGETHER WITH RESULTS OF TREATMENT.

Condition	No. Treated	Total No. Dis- charged	Condition on Discharge		
			Cured	Im- proved	No Change
Dyslalia with no mental retar- dation	58	32	24	5	3
Dyslalia with accompanying mental retardation	14	10	2	7	1
Cleft Palate	3	3	1	2	—
Partial deafness—for lip reading also	4	3	2	—	1
Stammer	24	14	4	7	3
TOTALS	103	62	33	21	8

(e) Sunlight Treatment

The number of individual children of school age who received Ultra Violet Light treatment at the Dunstable Health Centre in 1950 was 6.

There were 107 attendances. The defects for which treatment was given were:—

Debility	3
Debility and Asthma	1
Recurrent Rhinitis	1
Debility and Anaemia	1

(f) Ophthalmic Treatment

During the year appointments were made for 549 schoolchildren to be examined by Ophthalmic Surgeons for refractions, squints and other eye conditions. There is now little or no delay in the supply of glasses for schoolchildren.

(g) Occupational Therapy

Children who suffer from severe spastic and other crippling conditions are often debarred by their physical limitations from many of the normal activities of childhood. The Occupational Therapist visits the homes of these children to see whether anything can be done to widen their interests and activities.

(h) Other Treatment

Where children need special investigation (other than ophthalmic examinations), they are referred to hospital out-patient departments only after prior consultation with the family doctor, upon whom rests the responsibility for general medical care. Operations for tonsils and adenoids were held up for a period in the Autumn because of poliomyelitis in the County. This unfortunately further increased the already long waiting period for treatment.

EXAMINATIONS UNDER SECTIONS 34, 57 AND 59

Section 34

This section of the Education Act, 1944 places a duty on Local Education Authorities to ascertain those children in their area who require special educational treatment.

During 1950, 123 children thought to require special educational treatment were examined and the following recommendations made:—

Delicate	...	...	...	...	For convalescence at open air schools and holiday homes	...	7
					For private tuition	...	2
					To attend ordinary school	...	1
Educationally Sub-normal	...				For special schools	...	25
					For ordinary school with special educational treatment	...	10
Epileptic	...	...	...	...	To attend ordinary school	...	1
Maladjusted	...	...	...	...	To Child Guidance Clinic	...	20
Physically Handicapped	...	...	...	...	For special schools	...	3
					For private tuition	...	2
					For private school	...	1
					Not yet fit to attend school	...	1
Physically Handicapped and Educationally Sub-normal					For special school	...	1
Speech	...	...	...	...	For special school	...	1
Extra tuition in reading and writing	...	...	...	...		...	2
To be re-examined later	...	...	...	...		...	11
Re-examinations	...	...	...	...		...	15
Reports to Local Health Authority—							
(a) Section 57(3)	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
(b) Section 57(5)	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
No action	...	...	...	...	...	...	12

In addition, 19 children were examined at the request of magistrates of Juvenile Courts.

Section 57 (3)

In the County, excluding the Borough of Luton, 5 children were found to be suffering from a disability of mind of such a nature or to such an extent as to make them incapable of receiving education at school.

In each case a report to this effect was issued to the Local Health Authority.

Section 57 (5)

Under this Section of the Act, 2 children suffering from a disability of mind of such a nature or to such an extent as to require supervision after leaving school were reported to the Local Health Authority.

Section 59

Every child to be employed must be medically examined to ensure that the employment will not be prejudicial to his health or physical development and will not render him unfit to obtain proper benefit from his education.

159 children were examined during 1950 and certificates of fitness were granted in all cases except one.

TABLE XII.—NUMBER OF HANDICAPPED PUPILS WHO IN 1950 WERE EITHER NEWLY PLACED BY THE AUTHORITY IN BOARDING OR HOSPITAL SPECIAL SCHOOLS OR HOMES ; OR NEWLY ASCERTAINED AS REQUIRING EDUCATION AT SPECIAL SCHOOLS OR BOARDING IN HOMES.

Category	No. of Handicapped Pupils who in 1950 were:—	
	(a) Newly placed	(b) Newly ascertained
Blind	2	1
Partially Sighted	—	1
Deaf	—	—
Partially Deaf	2	21
Delicate	20	21
Physically Handicapped	—	3
Educationally Sub-Normal	52	39
Maladjusted	9	8
Epileptic	1	3
TOTALS	86	97

In addition to the children listed, arrangements were made through the hospital service for the admission of 64 children to Hospital Special Schools. The cost of educating these children is borne by the Authority.

TABLE XIII.—SHOWING THE POSITION IN REGARD TO HANDICAPPED PUPILS AS AT 1ST DECEMBER, 1950.

Category		Number of Handicapped Pupils who on 1st December, 1950 were:—					
		(A) Attending Boarding or Hospital Special Schools	(B) Boarded in Homes	(C) Attending Independent Schools under arrangements made by the Authority	(D) Totals of (A) (B) and (C)	(E) Receiving education at home under Section 56 of the Education Act, 1944	(F) Requiring places in Special Schools, including those unplaced children who were receiving home tuition
Blind	...	4	—	—	4	—	—
Partially Sighted	...	2	—	—	2	1	1
Deaf	...	13	—	1	14	—	—
Partially Deaf	...	6	—	—	6	—	—
Delicate	...	10	—	—	10	2	8
Physically Handicapped	...	10	—	—	10	8	8
Educationally Sub-normal	...	50	—	3	53	—	87
Maladjusted	...	2	2	10	14	1	6
Epileptic	...	6	—	—	6	—	3
TOTALS	...	103	2	14	119	12	113

Children suffering from multiple disabilities are classified under the major disability.

MILK IN SCHOOLS SCHEME.

All schools in the County area received milk under the Milk in Schools Scheme and every endeavour was made to secure a designated supply to each. In 15 instances, however, it was possible to supply only non-designated milk.

Each quarter during the year, a sample of milk was taken for bacteriological examination from every retailer supplying milk to the schools in the County area and the results of the examinations are set out below:—

TABLE XIV.—NUMBER OF SAMPLES OF MILK TAKEN FROM SCHOOLS AND SUBMITTED FOR BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION DURING 1950.

Bacteriological Samples		Routine Samples			First Follow-up			Second Follow-up			Third Follow-up			Totals
		Sat.	Unsat.	Total	Sat.	Unsat.	Total	Sat.	Unsat.	Total	Sat.	Unsat.	Total	
Quarter ended— 31st March, 1950 30th June, 1950 30th September, 1950 31st December, 1950 TOTALS	...	74	23	97	16	1	17	—	1	1	—	—	—	115
	...	63	23	86	8	7	15	—	3	3	—	2	2	106
	...	37	16	53	6	3	9	1	2	3	1	—	1	66
	...	57	16	73	11	1	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	85
	...	231	78	309	41	12	53	1	6	7	1	2	3	372

A return is made to the Ministry of Education every four months giving details of the number and percentages of pupils taking milk in relation to the total number present in the schools on the day selected for the return. The following table is based on this information, and for the purposes of comparison, the details for 1948 and 1949 are also given. The percentage of pupils taking milk has declined slightly during the period 1948-1950.

TABLE XV.—NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF PUPILS TAKING MILK IN RELATION TO THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT.

	No. of pupils present			No. of pupils taking milk			Percentage of pupils taking milk		
	1948	1949	1950	1948	1949	1950	1948	1949	1950
February	14,078	14,497	14,884	11,758	12,460	12,038
June	14,642	15,577	15,808	12,475	13,123	13,042
October	14,617	15,778	16,170	12,404	12,943	12,885
							83.5	85.9	80.9
							85.2	84.2	82.4
							84.9	82.0	80.6

REPORT OF THE SENIOR DENTAL OFFICER

During the year there was no change in the position regarding dental surgeons. Three full-time and one part-time dental surgeons continued in the service.

In February, Miss A. R. Peck retired after twenty-five years service as a dental attendant on the County staff.

Although the Service is still much under-staffed, most of the schools have been visited in the past two years. In 1950, 6,443 children were referred for treatment and about 85 per cent of them were actually treated. Inspections are held at the schools, but treatment is given at Clinics and in dental trailers. In the Dunstable, Leighton Buzzard and Biggleswade areas treatment is undertaken at the Clinics. Where it is not convenient for children to visit a clinic, the dental trailers are taken to those schools which have suitable facilities. The schools are then used as treatment centres and children from small schools nearby attend for treatment.

The lack of an adequate number of dental surgeons has caused the authorities and professional bodies concerned to consider possible remedies. Amongst those now being discussed are the training of dental nurses and the employment of dental hygienists. It seems that legislation will be necessary before dental nurses can be employed in the manner envisaged, but there is no legal bar to the employment of dental hygienists, whose work is much more restricted. However, in whatever form help comes, it will be welcome.

TABLE XVI.—NUMBER OF PUPILS INSPECTED AND TREATMENT
GIVEN BY DENTAL SURGEONS DURING 1950.

Pupils inspected—							
Periodic age groups	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,950
Specials	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,654
							<hr/>
TOTAL	...	...	...	...	...	...	9,604
Number found to require treatment	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,493
Number referred for treatment	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,443
Number actually treated	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,614
Attendances made by pupils for treatment	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,054
Half-days devoted to—							
Inspection	107
Treatment	942
Fillings—							
Permanent Teeth	2,917
Temporary Teeth	681
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TOTAL	3,598

Number of Teeth filled—

Permanent Teeth	2,804
Temporary Teeth	672

TOTAL	3,476
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Extractions—

Permanent Teeth	966
Temporary Teeth	6,157

TOTAL	7,123
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Administration of general anaesthetics for extractions	2,711
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Other operations—

Permanent Teeth	1,340
Temporary Teeth	87

TOTAL	1,427
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ANNUAL REPORT
of the
SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER
of the
BEDFORD DIVISIONAL EXECUTIVE
for the Year 1950

STAFF

Divisional School Medical Officer

G. K. BOWES, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Assistant School Medical Officer

FRANCES ANNE WILLIAMS, M.B., B.S.(Lond.), M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
D.P.H.(Vict.).

Divisional School Dental Officer

V. A. VASEY, L.D.S., R.C.S.Eng.

School Nurses

MRS. D. DAVIDSON, S.R.N.

MRS. I. COOMBS, S.R.N., S.C.M.

There were no changes in the staff during the year. Specialist members of the staff whose services are available over the County generally are given in the report of the County School Medical Officer.

GENERAL STATISTICS

The average school population for the year was 5,719, in comparison with 5,570 for the previous year.

There are 19 school departments in the Borough area.

<i>Type of School</i>						<i>Number of Schools</i>	<i>Number on Roll</i>
Nursery	...	...	...	...	...	1	41
Infant	...	...	...	...	...	6	1,342
Primary Junior Mixed	...	...	...	...	...	5	1,742
Primary Junior Mixed and Infant	...	...	...	...	...	2	689
Primary Mixed, All Ages, 5–15 years	...	...	...	...	...	1	253
Secondary Modern*	...	...	...	...	...	4	1,652
						<hr/> 19	<hr/> 5,719
						<hr/>	<hr/>

NOTE*

Mixed	...	...	...	...	...	2
Boys	...	...	...	...	...	1
Girls	...	...	...	...	...	1

SCOPE OF MEDICAL INSPECTION

For the first time since the end of the war it was possible to maintain a complete system of medical inspections.

Children examined at routine inspections were as follows:—

- (a) “Entrants”—on entry to the ordinary class of an infant school at the age of 5 or soon after, or to a nursery class or nursery school at an earlier age.
- (b) “Intermediates”—during the last year of attendance at a primary school, that is at the age of 10–11 years.
- (c) “Leavers”—during the last year of attendance at a secondary school, that is at the age of 14–15 years.

The Infant Schools are visited once a term for routine examinations, so that children are seen as soon as possible after admission; while schools are visited once a year for examination of the groups of intermediates and leavers, so as to make sure that children do not leave the primary or secondary schools without an examination in their last year.

Examinations are usually carried out on school premises, though they have been carried out on occasion at the school clinic because of lack of accommodation at the school concerned.

In addition, children are specially examined outside the routine groups at the request of the parent, the teacher or the school nurse if any special defect is suspected. These special examinations may take place either at school or at the school clinics. Children found at previous inspections to have some defect requiring treatment or observation are also examined when the school is visited for routine examinations.

There are two school clinics, at 30, Bromham Road and at 29, Barford Avenue. The School Medical Officer attends each of these clinics once a week, when children may be seen either at the request of the parent, or on reference from the family doctor for special forms of treatment, such as ultra-violet light, or on reference by the school nurses or teachers; and in some cases parents are invited to attend in order to discuss certain matters discovered at routine or special inspections, or on re-inspection for previously existing defects. After consultation the child may be referred to the family doctor, or recommended for treatment at the school clinic, or referred, after previous communication with the family doctor, for specialist treatment at hospital.

The figures for the year under review and for the previous year for comparison are given below.

			1950	1949
Inspections in prescribed groups	...	...	2,039	856
Special inspections at schools	...	...	26	41
Special inspections at clinics	...	...	279	341
Re-inspections	...	...	1,215	1,270

The figures for inspections in the prescribed groups show an increase in 1950 as this was the first year in which intermediates and leavers were examined, while the figures for special inspections at the school clinics show a diminution on account of the fact that children who would formerly have attended the school clinic now in increasing numbers attend the family doctor under arrangements of the National Health Service Act, 1946.

MEDICAL TREATMENT

The School Nurses attend the school clinics daily, when treatment for minor ailments is carried out.

A refraction clinic is held once weekly, or as often as required, for examination of children with defective vision.

The dental clinic is held daily at 30, Bromham Road. In addition to conservative treatment, two weekly sessions, or more if required, are held for extractions under a general anaesthetic.

The special clinics of the County School Health Service, as the Speech Therapy Clinic, the Child Guidance Clinic and the Orthoptic Clinic are available for treatment of children from the area of the divisional executive.

CONDITIONS FOUND ON INSPECTIONS NUTRITION AND GENERAL PHYSIQUE

To speak generally it may be said that the physique of children, especially in comparison with a decade or two ago, is good.

I am indebted to the Education Officer for the following figures relating to school milk and meals.

RETURNS MADE TO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Date of Return	MILK		MEALS		
	Number receiving milk	Percentage	Number receiving meals	Number (included in previous column) receiving meals free of charge	Percentage receiving meals
February 1950	4,118	% 86.6	2,527	163	% 53.2
June 1950	4,458	88.8	2,685	188	53.5
October 1950	4,893	91.4	1,765	173	51.6

It is probably true to say that under existing social conditions the effect of school meals on the physical health of children has been good.

The writer, however, sometimes wonders whether the cult of the full stomach has not gone too far, not only from points of view other than that of physical health, but even from the point of physical health itself. Sainthood, heroism and hard living may be little valued today, but one is tempted to compare with present day needs the diet of St. Hugh of Lincoln, a loaf of bread which had to last all the week; or, nearer our own time, of St. John Vianney, a pot of potatoes cooked at the beginning of the week and mouldy at the end; or even of the Scotch student of a few generations past, a sack of oatmeal carried full from home to his student's lodgings and carried back for replenishment when empty; and then to question whether insistence upon the need for not less than five meals a day—breakfast, milk with additions for lunch (to be replaced in adult life by coffee and cakes), dinner, tea and supper—really tend to form the highest character, and whether from the point of view of mere bodily health some of the digestive troubles which are now so frequent may not be due to too frequent and excessive feeding in accordance with habits acquired during school life.

UNCLEANLINESS

The number of children found with unclean heads was 146.

The following table shows the progressive improvement in cleanliness which has taken place during recent years.

Year				Number Unclean	Percentage of School Population
1941	...	...	...	1133	15.6
1942	...	...	...	883	14.5
1943	...	...	...	575	10.3
1944	...	...	...	468	8.3
1945	...	...	...	408	7.8
1946	...	...	...	382	7.7
1947	...	...	...	265	5.2
1948	...	...	...	284	5.1
1949	...	...	...	216	3.9
1950	...	...	...	146	2.5

90 children were cleansed at the Treatment Centre of the Bedford Borough Public Health Department. Regular cleansing of habitually infested families eliminates foci of infestation, and it is felt that more is really achieved by voluntarily securing the attendance of the families concerned, than by attempting to secure cleanliness by the imposition of penalties under the Education Act, which would probably be no more effective.

New methods of treatment, including the use of modern insecticides, and the enthusiasm of the School Nurses have secured these good results.

MINOR AILMENTS

GENERAL

The following table shows the attendances at the school clinics for the years from 1948.

	<i>1950</i>	<i>1949</i>	<i>1948</i>
Attendances	3,637	4,802	6,660
Number of individual children attending	984	1,026	1,147

The continued decline in attendances is due to the effect of the National Health Service Act. Nevertheless the school clinics serve a useful purpose in the treatment of those conditions where regular daily treatment by the School Nurses is of material benefit.

RINGWORM

This condition has now become rather a rarity. One case of ringworm of the scalp, nine of ringworm of the body were discovered. The one case of ringworm of the scalp received treatment by epilation at a London hospital.

SCABIES

This condition also has almost disappeared after its high war-time prevalence. No cases were discovered at inspections, but from other sources two cases were heard of, and the children received treatment at the Bedford Borough Treatment Centre.

HOSPITAL TREATMENT

GENERAL

Hospital treatment generally is the responsibility of the Regional Hospital Board.

TONSILS AND ADENOIDS AND ALLIED CONDITIONS

These conditions require special mention. When operation appears desirable, or consultation is necessary, children suffering from enlarged tonsils and adenoids are referred to the Ear, Nose and Throat Department of the Bedford General Hospital, South Wing. 68 children were so referred during the year. 58 in all were ascertained to have received operative treatment during the year, of whom 20 were referred in 1949.

Operations were held up for a few weeks on account of the prevalence of poliomyelitis in the district. There is still a long waiting list for operation.

Deafness and other diseases of the ears are often associated with unhealthy conditions of the nose and throat, and may also occur without any obvious disease of the tonsils and adenoids. 13 children were referred to the hospital on account of deafness or ear disease, not associated with obvious chronic tonsillitis and adenoids.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

MEASLES

Measles now seems to occur in epidemic form every year. 283 cases were notified among children of school age, not all of whom, however, attended schools of the Local Education Authority.

SCARLET FEVER

77 cases occurred among school children; these occurred during the early part of the year and represented the end of an epidemic which began in the latter part of the preceding year.

DIPHTHERIA

No cases occurred among school children. In fact, largely on account of the success of the immunisation campaign, diphtheria has become a rarity.

ACUTE ANTERIOR POLIOMYELITIS

Four cases occurred, of which particulars are given in the following table.

Sex	Date of Onset	Age	Type of Illness
Male ...	1.11.50	10 yrs.	Non-paralytic
Male ...	22. 8.50	9 yrs.	Non-paralytic
Female ...	1.11.50	6 yrs.	Paralytic—imperfect recovery, residual paralysis of both legs
Male ...	11. 9.50	6 yrs.	Paralytic—muscles of throat, imperfect recovery

The last case in the table occurred within a few day of operation for tonsillectomy. There had at that time seemed no sufficient justification for placing a ban on operations.

This last case was not formally notified in Bedford as the onset of illness occurred while away on holiday.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The present policy is to advise the full course of injections at 8 months, or as soon after as possible, followed by reinforcing injections on school entry, again at about 8 years, and at about 12 years.

The following table shows the work carried out among school children from all types of schools.

					<i>Received full course</i>	<i>Received single reinforcing injections</i>
Age 3- 5 years	...	...	...	...	26	108
Age 5-10 years	...	...	...	...	78	341
Age 10-15 years	...	...	...	...	52	197
Age 15 years and over	...	...	...	...	—	2
					<hr/>	<hr/>
	TOTAL	...	...	...	156	648
					<hr/>	<hr/>

Sessions are usually held about once a month at each of the school clinics. Circulars are sent to Head Teachers at the beginning of each term and their co-operation is most valuable in distributing and securing return of the forms of consent from parents.

It is estimated that 70 per cent of all children of school age had at some time or other received a full immunising course.

SPECIAL FORMS OF TREATMENT

ULTRA VIOLET LIGHT TREATMENT

The following table shows a summary of the work carried out at the centres.

			<i>Sessions held</i>		<i>Total treatments</i>		<i>Number of individual children treated</i>	
			<i>1950</i>	<i>1949</i>	<i>1950</i>	<i>1949</i>	<i>1950</i>	<i>1949</i>
3, Brereton Road	...	...	156	140	1,883	1,898	153	188
29, Barford Avenue	...	...	97	126	1,531	2,108	130	175

The following table shows the conditions treated. In most cases there was very definite benefit.

<i>Condition for which treatment was given</i>	<i>Number of children treated</i>
Diseases of the ear, nose and throat	137
General debility	55
Bronchitis	17
Other conditions of the lungs	15
Diseases of the skin	10
Enlarged cervical glands	7
Nervous illnesses	6
Rheumatism	6
Poor appetite	5
External eye complaints	5
Anaemia	3
Malnutrition	3
Other defects and diseases	14

ORTHOPAEDIC AND POSTURAL DEFECTS

Treatment is undertaken for children with minor defects at the Bedford Physical Training College. 16 children were referred for treatment during the year.

Children requiring more special treatment or advice are referred to the Orthopaedic Department of the Bedford General Hospital, South Wing. 10 children were so referred.

SPEECH THERAPY

38 children received treatment from the Speech Therapist during the year.

The following table gives details.

Number of individual children treated	...	...	...	...	38
Number of attendances	...	...	...	...	519
Results—					
Cured	...	...	...	...	17
Benefited	...	...	...	...	18
No improvement	...	...	...	...	3

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Children who require special educational treatment on account of some physical handicap, some defect of the sense organs, or mental retardation, are usually dealt with directly by the County Education Committee and the figures relating to such children are given in the report of the County School Medical Officer.

DISABILITY OF MIND

34 children (including 3 attending schools other than those maintained by the Local Education Authority) were examined. The following table shows the diagnosis in accordance with which recommendations were made.

No disability of mind	...	...	...	2
Maladjusted	...	...	...	17
Educationally subnormal	...	...	...	9
Maladjusted and educationally subnormal				2
Unfit for education within the school system	...	...	...	4

During the year a special residential school for educationally subnormal children at Great Gaddesden was opened by the County Education Authority, and 12 children from the area of the Divisional Executive were resident in this school at the end of the year. Other educationally subnormal children remain in the ordinary schools.

Maladjusted children are usually referred to the Child Guidance Clinic and details are given in the report of the County School Medical Officer.

DENTAL INSPECTION AND TREATMENT

The scheme of dental treatment remained as in previous years.

The Divisional School Dental Officer reports as follows:—

The dental health of the school children attending schools of the Divisional Executive continues to be good and although much has been published in the national press as to the collapse of the school dental service due to the operation of the Health Act, it is gratifying that up to the present the borough children have not been affected. It is somewhat difficult to understand why it was not fully realised that with the introduction of the new Act and its conditions, which seemed to make even the comparative remuneration of dental officers unfair, that many of them left to seek other pastures and that the children would be the victims of such an exodus. This is precisely what has happened and much valuable work done in the past must now take care of itself. The actual effect of the new Act in so far as this clinic is concerned, is, that a greater number of children are coming for treatment, not only from the borough but the outlying districts as well, consequently this means that routine treatment has to wait longer than in the past. This is to be expected, being due to the fact that treatment can be given more speedily at the clinic than elsewhere, and after all the clinic does cater specially for children.

Most of the extractions are still done under a general anaesthetic which retains its popularity, and without which one could not do the work half as efficiently; the after effects are practically negligible.

The Dental Officer desires to thank the School Medical Officers and the staff of the School Health Service for their valuable help during the year.

(Signed) V. A. VASEY,

Divisional School Dental Officer.

CONCLUSION

The doctors are not content with dominating sickness; they make health sickly, to guard against their patients' ever escaping from their authority.

So wrote Michael, Lord of Montaigne, some centuries ago, and his words contain truth today.

As the writer's thoughts have wandered during routine medical inspections he has questioned himself what would happen if many of the "defects" ascertained and catalogued at the cost of so much labour, time and money, and treated at a similar cost were left to themselves. Other medical men, perhaps stimulated by the fact that all medical treatment is now free (to the patient) and appalled by the long list of real or imagined defects awaiting treatment at hospital, have examined the matter more critically and thoroughly than the writer has ever attempted, and reached the conclusion that many so-called defects in infants and young children are purely imaginary or simply stages in the normal process of growth and development. As examples may be given many cases of enlarged tonsils which are thought to require removal; nearly all those conditions which are thought to require circumcision in quite young children; most cases of

knock knees which are thought to require treatment by special shoes and splints; and cases of so-called "flat feet" which are thought to require treatment by similar shoes and exercises. It is not of course denied that there are some real defects in these and other categories which might be mentioned. These remarks are made to indicate the real difficulties there are in any system of routine medical inspection in deciding what "defects" are real and require treatment, and what are not defects at all in any true sense; and to warn readers of this report that the figures relating to defects given in the tables must be taken with reserve.

The general conclusion to be reached from these remarks, the remainder of the report and the year's work, is that, as the result of the school health service, some defects receive treatment with benefit; some, the writer at least feels that he has subjected to treatment quite unnecessarily; while, as the result of it all, the general impression, though there are some points of view from which this impression may not be quite true, is that the physique of children leaving schools is good, and compares very well with the physique of children of a decade or two ago.

STATISTICAL TABLES

relating to the work of the
SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE
(Bedford Divisional Executive)

FOR THE YEAR 1950

For the purpose of comparison figures
relating to previous years are given

TABLE I.—MEDICAL INSPECTION OF PUPILS ATTENDING MAINTAINED
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Return of Children Inspected 1st January to 31st December, 1950.

A.—PERIODIC MEDICAL INSPECTIONS

No. of Inspections in the Prescribed Groups						1948	1949	1950
Entrants	...	...	...	...	...	779	856	784
Second Age Group	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	783
Third Age Group	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	472
TOTALS	...	...	...	...	...	779	856	2,039

B.—OTHER INSPECTIONS

						1948	1949	1950
Number of Special Inspections	...	...	...	...	...	681	382	305
Number of Re-Inspections	...	...	...	...	...	1,765	1,270	1,215
TOTALS	...	...	...	...	...	2,446	1,652	1,520

C.—PUPILS FOUND TO REQUIRE TREATMENT

Number of Individual Pupils found at Periodic Medical Inspection to Require Treatment (excluding Dental Diseases and Infestation with Vermin).

Group (1)	For defective vision (excluding squint) (2)			For any of the conditions recorded in Table 11A (3)			Total individual pupils (4)		
	1948	1949	1950	1948	1949	1950	1948	1949	1950
Entrants ...	6	3	2	187	177	165	193	180	167
Second Age Group ...	—	—	19	—	—	37	—	—	56
Third Age Group ...	—	—	24	—	—	15	—	—	38
TOTALS ...	6	3	45	187	177	217	193	180	261

TABLE II.—A—RETURN OF DEFECTS FOUND BY MEDICAL INSPECTION IN THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1950.

Defect or Disease (1)	Periodic Inspections—No. of defects			Special Inspections—No. of defects								
	Requiring treatment (2)			Requiring treatment (4)								
	Requiring to be kept under observation but not requiring treatment (3)			Requiring to be kept under observation but not requiring treatment (5)								
	1948	1949	1950	1948	1949	1950	1948	1949	1950			
Skin ...	9	3	6	13	3	7	79	35	23	16	10	2
Eyes—												
(a) Vision ...	6	3	45	2	5	5	97	49	57	4	3	2
(b) Squint ...	6	6	9	8	9	11	9	4	4	1	1	—
(c) Other ...	—	—	—	—	—	5	18	8	7	—	4	—
Ears—												
(a) Hearing ...	2	4	13	2	1	5	15	7	4	4	1	—
(b) Otitis Media ...	2	2	—	1	—	3	8	2	2	1	—	—
(c) Other ...	2	2	5	1	1	9	11	10	5	11	6	1
Nose or Throat ...	55	46	79	70	67	130	84	46	47	9	10	5
Speech ...	3	1	1	6	2	7	5	4	1	2	2	—
Cervical Glands ...	3	1	2	6	3	4	9	2	3	7	—	1
Heart&Circulation	—	1	—	—	1	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lungs ...	70	72	66	20	29	29	27	7	11	2	3	1
Developmental—												
(a) Hernia ...	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	—
(b) Other ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Orthopaedic—												
(a) Posture ...	4	12	8	2	7	6	3	7	2	—	—	—
(b) Flat foot ...	3	3	1	1	4	6	6	1	4	—	—	1
(c) Other ...	4	7	8	6	6	21	5	1	8	—	1	—
Nervous System—												
(a) Epilepsy ...	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	—	—	1	—	—
(b) Other ...	5	—	2	6	—	4	11	—	2	3	—	2
Psychological—												
(a) Development ...	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Stability ...	—	3	1	—	3	1	—	—	17	—	10	2
Other ...	32	21	13	14	21	61	147	84	54	86	60	24

B.—CLASSIFICATION OF THE GENERAL CONDITION OF PUPILS
INSPECTED DURING THE YEAR 1950 IN THE AGE GROUPS.

Year	No. of Children Inspected	A		B		C	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1948	779	632	81.0	136	17.5	11	1.4
1949	856	802	93.7	48	5.6	6	.7
1950	2,039	722	35.4	1,296	63.6	21	1.0

TABLE III.—INFESTATION

	1948	1949	1950
(1) Total number of examinations in the schools by the school nurses	16,491	16,926	16,671
(2) Total number of individual pupils found to be infested	284	216	146
(3) Number of individual pupils in respect of whom cleansing notices were issued (Section 54 (2), Education Act, 1944) ...	—	—	—
(4) Number of individual pupils in respect of whom cleansing orders were issued (Section 54 (3), Education Act, 1944) ...	—	—	—

TABLE IV.—TREATMENT OF PUPILS ATTENDING MAINTAINED
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

GROUP 1.—DISEASES OF THE SKIN (excluding uncleanness, for
which see Table III).

				Number of cases treated or under treatment during the year					
				By the Authority			Otherwise		
				1948	1949	1950	1948	1949	1950
Ringworm—(1) Scalp				2	2	—	3	3	1
(2) Body				10	18	9	—	—	—
Scabies				37	16	2	—	—	—
Impetigo				58	49	14	—	—	—
Other skin diseases				—	105	19	—	—	—
TOTALS				107	190	44	3	3	1

GROUP 2.—EYE DISEASES, DEFECTIVE VISION AND SQUINT

	Number of cases dealt with					
	By the Authority			Otherwise		
	1948	1949	1950	1948	1949	1950
External and other, excluding errors of refraction and squint	10	31	25	—	—	—
Errors of Refraction (including squint)	389	324	287	—	—	—
TOTALS	399	355	312	—	—	—
Number of pupils for whom spectacles were—						
(a) Prescribed	225	166	153	—	—	—
(b) Obtained	145	119	111	—	—	—
TOTALS	370	285	264	—	—	—

GROUP 3.—DISEASES AND DEFECTS OF EAR, NOSE AND THROAT

	Number of cases treated					
	By the Authority			Otherwise		
	1948	1949	1950	1948	1949	1950
Received operative treatment—						
(a) for diseases of the ear ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
(b) for adenoids and chronic tonsillitis	—	—	—	37	51	58
(c) for other nose and throat conditions	—	—	—	—	—	—
Received other forms of treatment	219	210	193	129	—	13
TOTALS	219	210	193	166	51	71

GROUP 4.—ORTHOPAEDIC AND POSTURAL DEFECTS

				1948	1949	1950
(a) Number treated as in-patients in hospitals				5	3	1

GROUP 5.—SPEECH THERAPY

	Number of cases treated		
	By the Authority		
	1948	1949	1950
Number of pupils treated by Speech Therapists	40	40	38

GROUP 6.—OTHER TREATMENT GIVEN

	Number of cases treated		
	By the Authority		
	1948	1949	1950
Miscellaneous minor ailments	1,020	776	857

TABLE V.—DENTAL INSPECTION AND TREATMENT

	1948	1949	1950
(1) Number of pupils inspected by the Dental Officer—			
(a) Periodic age groups	6,043	4,510	3,898
(b) Specials	270	448	688
TOTALS (1)	6,313	4,958	4,586
(2) Number found to require treatment	2,397	2,109	2,519
(3) Number referred for treatment	—	—	2,127
(4) Number actually treated	2,026	1,834	1,822
(5) Attendances made by pupils for treatment ...	2,933	2,781	2,485
(6) Half-days devoted to—			
Inspection	39	35	29
Treatment	343	340	334
TOTALS (6)	382	375	363
(7) Fillings—			
Permanent Teeth	914	844	714
Temporary Teeth	6	13	—
TOTALS (7)	920	857	714
(8) Extractions—			
Permanent Teeth	428	461	408
Temporary Teeth	3,078	3,416	2,881
TOTALS (8)	3,506	3,877	3,289
(9) Administration of general anaesthetics for extraction	1,614	1,542	1,462
(10) Other operations—			
Permanent Teeth	524	375	377
Temporary Teeth	1	10	—
TOTALS (10)	525	385	377